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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON ZARQAWI AND U.S. DEMOCRACY PROMOTION

Editorial Commentary on Zarqawi's Death

-- "No consolation for deputies behind bars"

Political analyst and columnist Fahd Kheetan writes on the inside page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (06/13): "The justification provided by the deputies who offered their condolences on Zarqawi's death and by their leadership seemed unconvincing. True, the government, and for humanitarian and family considerations, allowed Zarqawi's family to have an open house and receive condolences from relatives and friends, yet, what applies to Zarqawi's family does not apply to deputies who have high ranking political and party positions that supersede their social roles.... They are deputies and they are Islamists, and this is what they did not realize when they decided to make the condolence visit. The problem lies not in performing their duty of offering condolences, but in the remarks made by some of them afterwards that highly provoked people's feelings.... The Islamic movement did not understand that the state's position on terrorism and the Salafist forces supporting it is a categorical position not subject to bargaining, and that from now on any person, regardless of his position or immunity, will be held accountable if he acts as if he is supporting terrorism.... The rhetoric of the Islamists requires serious reconsideration. We have more than enough of crises, internal tensions and confrontations, and for what? Zarqawi? It is not too late to lay to rest this crisis. The Islamic movement, both the Brotherhood and the IAF, can issue a joint statement that includes a clear denunciation of Zarqawi's approach, thought and action in both Jordan and Iraq, without any buts, and includes full support for the Iraqi resistance against the American occupation, a condemnation of the killing of innocent people, and of course support for the right of the Palestinian people to legitimate resistance.... The deputies stay behind bars is harmful to Jordan's reputation. The Islamic movement needs to understand this as much as the government needs to move to contain the situation."

-- "Who is the martyr and who is the terrorist?"

Chief Editor Taher Odwan writes on the back-page of independent, mass-appeal Arabic daily Al-Arab Al-Yawm (06/13): "It is permissible to disagree in politics but it is not permissible to disagree over the stand vis-`-vis terrorism. 'Extremism' is even acceptable in politics... but violence and terrorism is an issue that does not accept discussion, nor is it the specialty of any mufti, party or organization leader. It is a matter that has to do with the society's security, state security, the stability of the regime and the application of the law.... What concerns me as a

writer and a reporter is to diagnose the event, which leads that we, on the national level, are in a state of confrontation between the state, the government and some of the society on one hand, and a group of the Muslim Brotherhood on the other. This confrontation is not about price hikes or the election law, but rather a conflict about a cultural, religious and legal issue related to the concepts of violence and terrorism.... This intellectual and political confrontation concerns all Jordanians because it has to do with the culture of terrorism and with the core of society's security and the permissible limits to which legitimate political and cultural work can reach.... It is therefore important for the society and the state to hear from the Islamic movement a decisive and conclusive stand on the concept of martyrdom. This is because the battle with terrorism is going on in our country and on our borders. Moreover, it is not an issue related to the American occupation of Iraq, but the blowing up of a Jordanian family's wedding party and killing tens of citizens."

-- "The hour of the truth for the IAF"

Columnist Bader Wardam writes on the inside page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (06/13): "I never imagined, in the ten years of taking up journalistic writing, that I, a firm believer in the right of freedom of expression, would write an article welcoming the arrest of a Jordanian citizen. But I do write, in complete conviction, welcoming the arrest of the four IAF deputies.... This is because I had never imagined that freedom of expression would sink to such low levels of degradation and irresponsibility. There is no justification or principle in the freedom of expression that gives the right to commend a terrorist who has killed innocent people and to offend the martyrs.... The four IAF deputies broke every single prohibition that we agree on in Jordan, and thus the state had to intervene and set matter rights.... Jordanian democracy does not mean that 'every citizen

has the right to speak in the manner that he wants', as Salem Falahat of the IAF had said. We do not accept the glorification of Israel, nor the publishing of drawings against the Prophet, nor the publishing of pornographic materials, nor the call to apostasy and atheism, nor the support for the occupation. At the same time, we do not accept giving the title of martyr of a terrorist like Zarqawi. There are limits that cannot be crossed. And just as the Islamists have the right to determine the limits that are and are not to be crossed, we too cannot allow the IAF to cross the lines of national principles.... The Jordanian state is larger and more important than the IAF with all its leaderships and its symbols. When it comes down to defying and assaulting the state, there is no room for silence. The IAF, now before tomorrow, must choose the role it wants to play in the Jordanian society. It is either a respectable political movement that takes up opposition for the benefit of the country and rejects violence or an organization that supports violence and terrorism. The method of dealing with the party will vary according to its position."

-- "More clarification of the massive error"

Center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour editorial (06/13) opines: "Offering condolences for the killer Zarqawi is wrong. Describing him as a martyr is wrong because we know his Jordanian and Iraqi victims. Offending Amman's martyrs is wrong. Turning their backs to their commitment to the nation, which they supposedly represent, is wrong. But the worst wrong that reaches the levels of criminality is sympathizing with the terrorists, because Zarqawi is not just a person, but a large, dangerous and destructive organization made up of many misled and misleading human beings ready to die for no worthy cause. Whether they realize the offense they committed against their country and people or not, the situation must be set right lest the terrorists, the evil people and the conspirators inside and outside the country start to think that there is room for them in our arena."

Editorial Commentary on U.S. Democracy Promotion in the Arab World

-- "'America and democracy in the Arab world"

Chief Editor Ayman Safadi writes on the back-page of centrist, independent Arabic daily Al-Ghad (06/13): "Years after launching an

extensive program to improve its image in the region, the United States continues to top the list of countries that Arabs see as harmful and dangerous to their interests. The problem that Washington seems not to have absorbed to this day lies in that the American credibility crisis stems from its policies towards the Middle East and not from the convictions and beliefs of Arabs and Muslims.... Instead of recognizing the pivotal need of changing its policies towards the Palestinian cause in any effort aimed at improving its image in the Arab world, the United States throws its failure on the Arab political system. This is a deficient diagnosis of the problem that will not resolve the problem and will not contribute to bridging the growing gap between the Arabs and America. True, the failure the Arab political system in developing a political and democratic climate that respects human rights and provides participation opportunities in ruling institutions does constitute a factor for frustration, desperation and extremism, but limiting the issue to this sin is an attempt to escape facing reality. America now says that it supports democracy in the region.... America summarized democracy in holding elections and other formalities, which serve its own internal interests of marketing the success of its endeavors to its people and cover up its failure in Iraq and Afghanistan.... America wants the democratization of the region to progress according to its own internal agenda. This is a very dangerous path. The development of Arab countries towards democracy must be a process with stages of maturity, and so cannot be summarized according to Washington's timetable.... This means that achieving a democratic society is a gradual change. The alternative is either the Iraqi model that is still paying the price for Washington's impetuous behavior or the control of religious parties because other political forces do not have that capacity. Either models is not a good omen for the democracy that people aspire."

RUBINSTEIN